Thomas Yale (1586–1619) of Plas Grono

Origin and Family

Born c. 1586. Died August 27, 1619, age 33.

Father: Dr. David Yale (c. 1540–1626)
Mother: Frances Lloyd, daughter of Dr. John Lloyd, D.C.L.
Spouse: Anne Lloyd Yale (1595–1659), daughter of George Lloyd, Bishop of Chester and Ann Wilkerson of Norwich.

Children[1]**:**

1. Thomas Yale (1616–1683)
2. David Yale, Father of Elihu Yale
3. Anne Yale

Thomas and Anne Yale are the progenitors of nearly all Yales in Colonial America.[1]

From Rodney Horace Yale[1]: “Thomas Yale was the eldest son of Dr. David Yale, D.C.L., Chancellor of Chester, and lived in Chester and Plas Grono, the family estate near Wrexham. He married about the year 1612, Anne Lloyd, daughter of George Lloyd, Bishop of Chester, 1604-1615.”

Occupation and Property

There is compelling evidence that Thomas and his family resided at Plas Grono. In 1876 when the house was being torn down, a sketch of a coat of arms over one of the mantle pieces was made and later shown by historian A.N. Palmer.[1] “This coat of arms at Plas Grono indicates that Thomas Yale and his family lived for some time at Plas Grono and it was most likely their permanent, or country home; however they also lived at Chester, and Mr. Palmer states, in his pedigree of the Yales of Plas Grono, that Thomas Yale died at Chester before August 26, 1619.”[1]

Lancashire and Chester official records[4] has this entry: “Apr 13 1612 Thomas Yale, son of David Yale, LL.D., Vicar-General of the Rt. Revd. Father in God George, by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of Chester, and Anne Lloyd, daughter of the said Bishop of Chester. Licence addressed to Thomas Mallorie, Clerk, B.D., Dean of Chester.”

Biographical details are sparse for this important ancestor. He died at age 33, leaving three children and a young widow. There is no mention of his education, occupation, or cause of death.[9] Plagues in the years before and after his death ravaged Chester, taking 20% of the population or more in 1603-1605 and one third of the population in 1647.[5] After a brief period of rapid growth from 1606-1612, the population declined during the period 1612-1629. Sanitary conditions were lacking in Chester, and records show the city had more than its share of beggars and vagrants. In addition, Chester was a staging area for soldiers on their way to suppress a rebellion in Ireland. There was also an influx of English immigrants during this time.[5]

English and Welsh towns were generally small and isolated. Chester, with a population of around 6,500 in 1630, was the largest city within 60 miles. “Towns depended on the countryside because the urban environment of Wales did not permit a natural increase in population. With their piles of

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filth and impure water, and with their inhabitants packed together, the towns were nurseries of pestilence and a threat, above all, to the survival of infants. Conditions [in the countryside] were not much better. Virtually everyone, for much of the time, was in some degree of pain, and it would appear that there were more diseases in the Tudor era than there had been previously."[2]

End of Life

With the prevalence of disease, and the lack of wars or rebellions in 1619, it is most likely that Thomas died from an illness – probably not the bubonic plague but some other common malady such as Tuberculosis (the leading cause of death of young men in the 17th century)[11] . This is reinforced by the "weakened in body" comment made in his will:

> *The last Will and testament of Thomas Yale gent. sonne and heyre of Mr. Doctor Yale Chauncellor of the Diocese of Chester late of the Cittie of Chester deceased.*
>
> *In the name of God Amen the xvth daye of October Anno dni 1619 I thomas Yale of the Cittie of Chester gent. beinge somewhat weakened in bodie but of sane memorie and understandinge ... my soule to god ... my bodie I comitt unto Xtian buriall ... And concerninge Imprimis Whereas my father David Yale Doctor of Lawe upon sale of his lands in Erthige in the Countie of Denbighte hath given unto me Eight hundred pounds.*[10]
>
> **Note**: The October 1619 date above conflicts with the known date of death in August 1619; therefore, the date is either an error in the original transcription or it is the date of probate.

Mr. A.N. Palmer said "I have seen in the Chester Probate Registry, the inventory of the goods of this Thomas Yale, of the city of Chester, gentleman, dated August 27, 1619. The three children of the deceased are mentioned in the inventory, and in addition, Mrs. Yale, evidently the widow of Thomas Yale (The value of this personal estate was £36-10s-8p.)."[1,3]

In his will he makes bequests to his wife, son David Yale, and daughter Anne Yale, who are not yet 21 and to son Thomas Yale, and to an unborn child if his wife carries one. He also makes bequests to his brother-in-law Deor Elyse; Uncle John Langley, Parson of Prestwich; brother George Yale; cousin William Lloyd of Halton; brother Richard Yale; cousin Edward Lloyd; Mr. John Barkley.[10]

The inventory of his personal estate was only £36 10s. 8d. However, in 1619 his father sold the Erddig House estate and placed £800 from the sale in trust for Thomas and his heirs. This sum, not subject to probate, would have provided Anne and her children with a comfortable living after his death.

With the early death of Thomas, Anne Lloyd Yale became a widow with three small children before her thirtieth birthday. See Anne Lloyd Yale (c. 1595–1659) of New Haven, Connecticut for more information on her life.

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Research Notes

Online Genealogy References:
WikiTree ID: Yale-33
FamilySearch ID: LCG4-KJ5
Find a Grave Memorial: 117003490

Further Reading:
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- Yale, Max Brian. *Yale Family Coat of Arms* - Origin and History. *Max Brian Yale Genealogical Collection*, 2025
- Wikipedia: Puritans

References

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2. Davies, John. *A History of Wales*, London, England: Penguin Press, 1990.

3. Palmer, Alfred N.. “A History of Country Townships of the Old Parish of Wrexham”, 1903

4. The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, 1907

5. Foster, G.C.S. “A History of the County of Chester”, Vol 5 - Early Modern Chester, 1550-1762

6. Answers.Com Profile of Theophilus Eaton

7. Rootweb.Com resource page: St. Stephens Church, Coleman St. London

8. Wikipedia: Puritans

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10. Allen, Virgil D. ”The Will of Thomas Yale”. The American Genealogist 20, 1934, pp.30-33: Extracted from the Public Episcopal Registry at Chester. Marriage license cites Diocese of Chester 1611-12
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11. National Library of Medicine: Year of Birth Effects in the Historical Decline of Tuberculosis Mortality: A Reconsideration

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